

How can the same people who refused to air the episode of "Nightline" featuring the names of the soldiers killed in Iraq because it was "political," claim that this program is anything but a very long anti-Kerry ad? Not only that, the fact that Sinclair is requiring its station to air it commercial free shows that it is a political contribution in kind to the Bush campaign.

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. Sinclair does not own the airwaves over which it broadcasts. Those airwaves belong to the American people --- Democrats, as well as Republicans and Independents. Because it uses the public airwaves free of charge, Sinclair is obligated by law to serve the public interest, and that means the interests of all Americans of all political beliefs. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. We need to bring fairness back to the broadcasting industry. Thank you.